

# MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

## Pastor's Pen

And they were bringing children to [Jesus] that He might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, He was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to Me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And He took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands on them. (Mark 10:13-16)

During my time at Mission, and especially since the start of this school year, I have been working more and more with children. There is Confirmation class, the morning religion class with the middle-schoolers, school chapel, and karate class. And of course, this is in addition to the three children God has blessed Emily and me with! And when one spends time with children of various ages, one can certainly come to the conclusion that there is a lot to learn from children! And it seems apparent from the above reading that Jesus wanted His disciples to learn from the children as well.

But what did He want them to learn? He told them, "Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And when we hear those words of Jesus, we rightly conclude that He is not saying that only children can be saved. Rather, He is saying that there is an innate characteristic within children that all people must be like in order to enter the kingdom of God.

When we think about the characteristics of children, we often think about their positive and exemplary qualities. Children are naturally curious. They love to explore and they love to ask the "why?" of everything. Children soak up information like a sponge. It never ceases to amaze me how quickly children can learn. (Those of you who were at our Reformation Day service on the last Sunday in October heard how the children were able to explain all the symbolism of Luther's Rose!)

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## Important Dates:

November 1: All Saints' Day  
 November 3: Daylight Saving Time ends  
 November 11: Veterans' Day  
 November 28: Thanksgiving Day



Children tend to be more trusting and less suspicious than adults. It can seem easier to present God's Word to children because they simply take it for what it says. And any parent can tell you that children are born with a desire to be loved by their parents and to love them in return.

Those are all great qualities of children, and there's a lot that we adults can and should learn from them. But that's not the full picture of what Jesus would have His disciples, and us, learn from children. One of the differences between our culture and their culture is that we view children in a very positive light. We look to childhood as a time of joy and innocence, a time when one's future is full of potential. This view of childhood is reflected in how many families put a lot of time and resources into giving their children the best experiences possible. But the culture in Jesus' day viewed childhood in a less positive light. It wasn't that they didn't love their children. They certainly did! But to them, childhood was not idealistic. It was a time when ignorance and naivete needed to be shaped and disciplined into knowledge and maturity. Children did not have a place to speak in the company of learned adults.

And unfortunately, childhood was quite dangerous. Without modern medicine, pregnancy and delivery were fraught with peril. Childhood illnesses could be and often were devastating to their young bodies. A child's natural curiosity could lead to injuries that left life-long impacts. Large-scale calamities such as war or famine were harder on children than adults.

All this to say that the primary way in which children were viewed in Jesus' day was not as models of joy or innocence, but as models of *dependence*. Children were often at risk and unable to take care of themselves. When the people were bringing Jesus to touch them, it is quite likely that they wanted Jesus to touch them in order to heal them. These children needed help, the kind of help that only Jesus could provide.

And the disciples rebuked the people. Again, it's not that most people back then hated children. It's just that children, due to their dependance, were viewed as lesser. They were viewed as not having the status to bother a great teacher, particularly one as great as Jesus. And the disciples were partially right in that the children could not claim to have any sort of status or prestige such that Jesus owed them His time.

And yet they were very wrong about for whom Jesus came. He didn't come to help those who could help themselves. He didn't come for the righteous. He didn't come for those who had no need for a physician. He came for those who could do nothing to help themselves. He came for sinners who have no righteousness of their own. He came for those who cannot treat their sin-sick souls. He came for the children and all those who would receive the kingdom like these helpless and completely dependent little ones.

The passage quoted above from Mark is a passage that is always read at the service of Holy Baptism. Its relevance seems readily apparent when we bring an infant to the font to be washed in the waters of baptism, since we are literally bringing the little children to Jesus. But that passage is just as appropriate at the baptism of an adult as it is at the baptism of a child, if not even more so. After all, an infant is not going to argue that God is doing all the work or that maybe there's a bit of works-righteousness that can be added to what Jesus has done. But adults need to be taught by our Lord that we do not bring anything to God. We do not have any of our own righteousness to offer. We have no ability to help ourselves. We simply receive the kingdom like a little child. And so, when adult passes through the waters of Holy Baptism, the work that God does is just the same as when a little child is baptized.

The disciples thought they were doing the right thing by keeping the weak and needy little children away from such an important Teacher as Jesus. But He admonishes both them and us that of such is the kingdom of God. While there is much to learn from children (and I'm certainly still learning!), the greatest lesson Jesus wants us to learn from children is that we are totally dependent on God. But when we receive the kingdom of God like a little child, we find that our Heavenly Father gives to His dear children all we ever need. Amen.

Pastor Andrew Cave

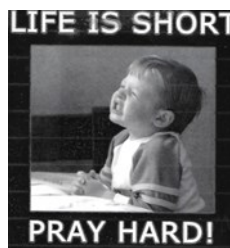


# Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry

## Thanking God

**Gratitude!** How can we thank God adequately for all He does for us? It seems the right answer is that we can't, and yet we must try! How easy it is to fall into quick superficial thanks that are routine in our Christian lives. Surprisingly to me, we have fallen into autumn and that means a busy season ahead of us! This seems a good time to take some quiet moments to deeply ponder all for which we are grateful. We all share our gratitude for our salvation, but we each have unique ways that God has helped, healed, comforted, rescued, provided for, loved and cherished.... And He has given others that bless us... Let us take some time to count the ways He shows each of us His love. Below are just a few scriptures we might want to incorporate into our prayer and devotion time:

- **Deuteronomy 10:20-21:** You shall fear the LORD your God. You shall serve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear. He is your praise. He is your God, who has done for you these great and terrifying things that your eyes have seen.
- **1 Chronicles 16:34:** Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.
- **1 Corinthians 1:4:** I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus.
- **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18:** Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
- **Psalms 30:12:** That my glory may sing your praise and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever!
- **Ephesians 5:20:** Always give thanks to God for everything
- **Philippians 4:6-7:** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
- **Psalms 28:7:** The LORD is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him.



# Stewardship

## *The consequences of shallow thankfulness*

Can you imagine a Thanksgiving dinner without turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy and pumpkin pie? I know I can't! To not have these on the menu, or worse, to run out of them with the family around the table, would be a culinary sin of epic proportions. An attempt to serve bratwurst and hamburgers in place of the standard fare would ring hollow and seem totally inappropriate and out of place. It isn't that the food would be bad; brats and burgers are pretty tasty. But not for Thanksgiving – they just don't go together!

This month, as we continue to walk through the stewardship hymn, "Forgive Us, Lord, for Shallow Thankfulness" (LSB 788), we turn our attention to verse three. Here, William Watkins Reid, Sr., the man who penned this text, draws attention to some things that do not go along with faithful, thankful stewardship.

*Forgive us, Lord, for selfish thanks and praise ...*

We see this often with small children. They greedily snatch the candy out of a grandparent's hand, savagely destroy the wrapper, and attempt to stuff the entire delicacy in their mouth in one bite, only to have a parent say, "Tell grandma thank you." This is followed by the pro forma thanks that is uttered between chocolate chews. It isn't really thankfulness; it is simply checking a box to keep mom or dad off their backs.

We never really outgrow this either. Our shallow thankfulness takes the form of feigned humility when praise is being offered. We are thankful that our admirers noticed and called us out: "Look at me! Aren't I special?" No thought at all is given to the fact that the Lord was the One who gave us the ability and opportunity for accomplishment. Our false blush is really only masking our selfish, credit-seeking gain. Once again, we find ourselves idolatrously thanking ourselves.

*For words that speak at variance with deeds ...*

What carries more weight: words or action? The steward who gives voice to the Gospel in the Divine Service but then lives like a pagan in the world does great damage, not only to others but to the Gospel itself! This is the consequence of failed stewardship. It is idolatry that separates the steward from the Lord.

Worse yet, it also impacts others negatively. When the failed steward is the reference point outside the Christian community, there are those who want no part of being Christian or following the Christ they claim. We see this play out in the impact of overt political activity among Christians based on governing policy as opposed to fidelity to the Word of God. When our lips and our lives are out of sync, like what used to happen with old movie projectors, the impact isn't funny – it obscures the Gospel!

*Forgive our thanks for walking pleasant ways*

*unmindful of a broken brother's need ...*

Our creature comforts often become an obstacle to faithful stewardship. This is true of both individual and corporate stewardship. Financial stewardship is often limited by our desire to be comfortable and have the latest toys and gadgets. Congregational stewardship is often limited by the desire to focus on what is best for the congregation as opposed to how resources might be best stewarded to reach the community with the Gospel.

When we see someone in need, or broken by the world, we often look at them as freeloaders. We admonish them to get a job. We insist that they learn our language, learn our customs, and make them their own. But this gets in the way of seeing every human being the way that Jesus sees them. Remember, that broken person is one for whom Jesus went to the cross to die and rise. When we are unmindful of these needs, our shallow thankfulness also stands in the way of the Gospel.

This stanza reminds us of the challenge we face. Our hearts are master idol-makers. Our shallow thankfulness threatens our souls and hinders others from seeing Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Stewardship is serious business. It is a task for which we were created. In our sinful failings, we are never relieved of these duties. In our Baptism, we are restored to be stewards of the Gospel. Our faithful stewardship is all about that Gospel.

Forgive us when our thanks are shallow, O Lord! In this month of Thanksgiving, grant us the grace to offer heaping helpings of this stewardship so that others may see Jesus!

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: [lcms.org/stewardship](https://lcms.org/stewardship)







**OktoberFest!**  
Mission Lutheran Church  
October 19, 2024



# Birthdays of the Month

## November Birthdays

		Date
Patricia	<b>Pathy</b>	2
Janet	<b>Franz</b>	4
Karen	<b>Reyes</b>	12
Cathy	<b>Stegemann</b>	12
Rosalie	<b>Burns</b>	13
Charlotte	<b>Muchow</b>	14
Jerry	<b>Del Bozque</b>	15
Sawyer	<b>Monica</b>	15
Vicki	<b>Kofoot</b>	17
Al	<b>Siffring</b>	17
Larry	<b>Tate</b>	19
Pat	<b>Duever</b>	21
Fran	<b>Gunderson</b>	21
Sonya	<b>Perry</b>	23
Socorro	<b>Del Bozque</b>	28
Kerri	<b>Shaw</b>	29
Cora	<b>Cave</b>	30

*Happy  
Anniversary*

## November Anniversaries

	Date	# of years
Al & Becky Lujan	8	38

*Happy Anniversary to all those couples married in November.*

*May God continue to bless you.*

If your birth and/or anniversary date is missing or incorrect, please notify Carol Moore  
in the church office.

# JULIETS

All women in the church are invited to our monthly ladies' lunch. And bring a friend!

Thursday, November 14 — D.H. Lescombes  
1720 Avenida de Mesilla

We meet at 11:30 am.

So that the restaurant can be prepared, please notify Debra Echtenkamp at least 2 days in advance if you plan to attend.

Call or text Debra at (901) 830-7216



## WINGS/LWML

The next gathering of WINGS (Women in God's Service) will be on Monday, **November 11**, at 6:30 PM in Luther Hall. All women are invited for fellowship and Bible study. Dessert will be provided.



## MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL

### MEETING MINUTES

AUGUST 20, 2024

President Doug Lorenz called the Mission Lutheran Church Council meeting to order at 6:33 PM. Other Council members present were: Pastor Cave, Wade Echtenkamp-Vice President, Carol Cooper-Secretary, Brad Mueller-Treasurer, Carol Moore-Financial Secretary, Richard Turk-Board of Elders, Karen Springer-ML School Board Chairman, Brad Springer, Sr-Board of Trustees, and Brad Springer, Jr-Outreach/Fellowship/Stewardship.

Opening Prayer - Pastor Cave opened the meeting with prayer.

Approval of Minutes - The minutes of the July 16, 2024 meeting were approved as amended for correction of a name spelling and addition of the names of our new teachers Tracy Krause and Susan Joanis. Carol Moore made the motion to approve the minutes as amended and Karen Springer seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

President Lorenz called for the following reports:

Pastor Cave's report is attached.

Vice President – Wade Echtenkamp-nothing to report.

Secretary – Carol Cooper has just purchased a recorder to aid in capturing more of the council discussions for greater detail and accuracy in reporting. Doug explained that some councils are not comfortable being recorded, but no one on our council has objection to having the recorder on. Carol expects to use the recorder at the next council meeting in October.

Treasurer – Brad Mueller-report is attached. Brad noted that we are not meeting our budget in contributions and may need to transfer funds from CDs to LCEF checking or Morgan Stanley. Doug observed a Temple Talk might be good before we are in a “crunch”.

Financial Secretary – Carol Moore has no report.

Elders – Richard Turk has nothing to report.

Trustees – Brad Springer reported the camera problem is solved; Bob Jakscy can now see the back lot. The “teacher shed” needs light; the other shed is finished, and a third shed is in process. White boards, cork boards, & TVs are all in use; replaced 40 bulbs and still more to do in Shilo's classroom. The kitchen freezer is not working like it should. Shirley Miller is interested in landscaping for projects.

Outreach/Fellowship/Stewardship – Brad Springer, Jr. confirmed with Council and Pastor that October 19 is a good date for October Fest.

ML School Board – Karen Springer-report is attached. Karen reported school is adjusting to being back in school. Pam Kell is working with a 6<sup>th</sup> grade special-needs student; funding is administered by Las Cruces Public Schools. Megan has reviewed our accreditation report; we are doing fine and on target and ready to address long-term goals. The School Board next meets on Thursday, August 22.

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President – Old Business: Doug Lorenz reported regarding phones that we will need 10 phones instead of 9; additional costs will be compensated by not having wiring issues.

Re: Community Board aka “Butterfly Board”, Doug suggested having a volunteer coordinator to link those who can help with the kinds of help needed. Karen Springer said she will bring up Doug’s suggestion with the School Board; “able-bodied parents might volunteer for the help need list”.

Karen also observed that it would be nice if we had a “back up” for Brad Mueller.

Doug reported that he and Pastor will be working on the second video later in the week.

President – Old Business (concluded)

Doug asked if any of the Council members have asked anyone to consider serving on the Church Council, perhaps filling the member’s position if the member is wanting a change.

New Business: The September meeting will be a Voters’ Assembly and will be on Sunday, September 22. The Voters’ Assembly will begin at 11:30AM after Bible Study. A light sandwich lunch will precede the Voters’ Assembly. Possible agenda items for the meeting suggested were: Phones over/under \$2,500, Discussion of what the Council Members do, and “new digital directory”.

Pastor closed the meeting with the Lord’s Prayer.

Carol Moore made a motion to adjourn. Wade Echtenkamp seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol L. Cooper, Secretary

**Note:** Board Reports that are indicated as being attached are available from the church secretary upon request. They are not included in the newsletter in order to save space.



# MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL

## Treasurer's Report for the Oct '24 Council/Voters Meeting

Report Preparation Date: October 1, 2024

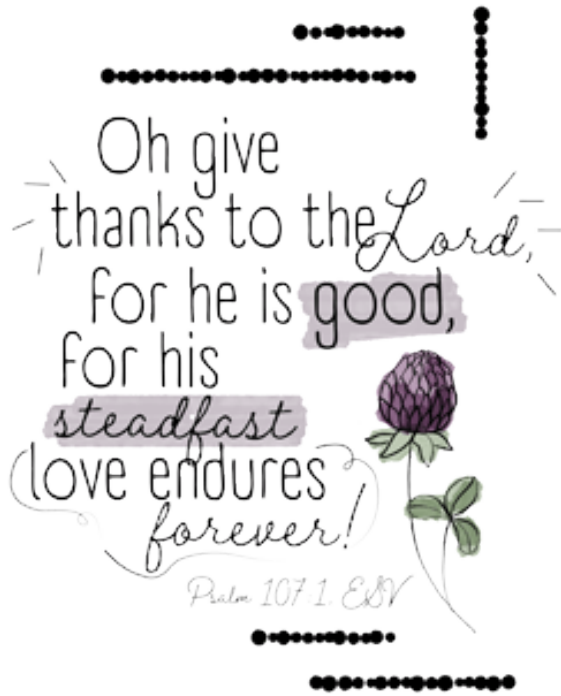
<b><u>Budget Status:</u></b>	<b><u>Month of Sep '24</u></b>	<b><u>FY25 thru Sep '24</u></b>	
	<b><u>Actual</u></b>	<b><u>Actual</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
<b><u>Income:</u></b>			
MLC General	\$24,955	\$74,864	\$102,271
MLS Total	\$29,283	\$94,849	\$73,355
Designated / Other	\$636	\$770	\$525
	<b>\$54,874 *</b>	<b>\$170,483 *</b>	<b>\$176,151 *</b>
<b><u>Expenses:</u></b>			
MLC Total	\$14,943 *	\$47,387 *	\$48,990 *
MLS Total	\$51,183	\$133,116	\$125,860
	<b>\$66,126</b>	<b>\$180,503</b>	<b>\$174,850</b>
Net Difference	<b>-\$11,252 *</b>	<b>-\$10,020 *</b>	<b>\$1,301 *</b>

### **MLC General Fund Contributions – FY25 (Thru Sep 31, 2024)**

Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$7,867
Average Weekly Contributions Received (FYTD) :	\$5,805
Average Weekly Surplus/ <b><u>Shortfall:</u></b>	<b>-\$2,062</b>
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$75,467
General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date:	\$102,271
Fiscal Year-to-Date Surplus/ <b><u>Shortfall:</u></b>	<b>-\$26,804</b>

### **Investments & Assets / Liabilities**

<b><u>Investments:</u></b>	Morgan Stanley/E*Trade (as of Sep 30, '24)	\$122,642
	Mission Lutheran Endowment Fund (as of Jun 30, '24)	\$79,519
	Thrivent (as of Sep 30, '24)	\$475,328
	LCEF MLC Youth Development CD Account	\$13,165
	LCEF General Funds CD Account #1	\$52,662
	LCEF General Funds CD Account #2	\$52,192
	LCEF General Funds CD Account #3	\$51,782
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$847,290</b>
<b><u>Current Assets:</u></b>	Shepherd's Staff Checking (as of Sep 30, '24)	<b>\$49,872</b>
	LCEF Checking (as of Sep 30, '24)	<b>\$3,334</b>
	Youth Activity Fund	\$3,766
	Youth Christian Development	\$12,500
	minus	
	MLS Reg/Tuition Holding	\$0
	Angel Scholarship Program	\$409
	Dedicated	
	COVID Grant	\$27,628
	Apple Tree Donations	\$1,712
	Emergency Tuition Assistance	\$5,850
	School Security Grant	\$8,774
	Staffeldt Scholarship Fund	\$7,877
	Total Checking Available After Dedicated Funds	<b>-\$15,310</b>
<b><u>Liabilities:</u></b>	None	



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           [office@mlschool.net](mailto:office@mlschool.net)

*Elder on Call: Jace Melton (210) 459-1023*

*Thanksgiving is on Thursday,  
 November 28<sup>th</sup>*

We're on the web!  
<http://missionlutheran.net>  
<http://mlschool.net>

**Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2024**

President	Doug Lorenz	Elders, Chairman	Richard Turk
Vice President	Wade Echtenkamp	Elders, Vice-chairman	Nathan Graff
Treasurer	Brad Mueller	Trustees	Brad Springer, Sr.
Secretary	Carol Cooper	Outreach	Brad Springer
Financial Secretary	Carol Moore	Day School Education	Karen Springer